

Governor's Task Force on the Economic Status of Kentucky's Women

A project of the
Kentucky Commission on Women (KCW)

The Problem

National and statewide studies report a grim picture of the economic status of the women of Kentucky.

According to the Institute for Women's Policy Research

- *The median annual income for female-headed families in Kentucky is \$10,7000.*
- *In 1995 16.9% of women in Kentucky lived below the official poverty level.*
- *Kentucky ranks in the bottom third in the nation in the following categories:*
 - *Percent of college educated women*
 - *Women's business ownership*
 - *Percent of women above poverty level*

According to the Kentucky Long-Term Policy Research Center

- *87.9 % of adult recipients of KY Transitional Assistance Program (K-TAP) are women.*
- *Two thirds of single-mother families with children under the age of six live in poverty.*

Project Vision

The Governor's Task Force on the Economic Status of Kentucky's Women will examine the issues that are obstacles to the economic progress of Kentucky women, identify solutions, and develop a plan of action.

Project Goals

1. To foster an inclusive initiative that will rely on the participation and engagement of Kentuckians to improve the quality of life for women and their families;
2. To examine the economic status of Kentucky women, including existing obstacles to progress and available resources;
3. To support Governor Patton's mission to "Set Kentucky on the path to achieving economic opportunity and a standard of living above the national average in 20 years";

4. To educate the public about these findings;
5. To offer solutions to obstacles; and
6. To provide a plan of action.

Project Outcomes

1. To publish a comprehensive report of the findings and the plan of action that will serve as a guide for decision-makers throughout the Commonwealth;
2. To propose remedial legislation for passage by the Kentucky General Assembly;
3. As a result of the work of the Task Force, KCW will convene a statewide summit on the economic status of Kentucky women, where business, government, and civic leaders will be challenged to champion the plan of action.

Project Structure

The Task Force will investigate the following obstacle areas:

1. Education and Leadership (HS/Higher Ed opportunities, literacy, empowerment, mentoring, leadership/networking skills...)*
2. Economic Development and Employment (wage gap, welfare reform, business development, job skills/training, unions, housing, childcare, transportation, subsistence, divorce/child support, agriculture policies/changes occurring, occupational shortages, benefits (i.e. healthcare, retirement) ...)*
3. Women in Positions of Power (voting, running for office (local, state, and national), lobbying, appointments, positions of power within industry/business...)*
4. Social and Cultural Barriers (traditional gender roles/values, inequities based on race, class, sexual orientation, age, region, citizenship, disability..., judiciary system/legal support, violence against women, access to healthcare and health insurance, media...)*
5. State Government Employees (issues as they uniquely affect women state government employees, i.e., pay equity, training, childcare, leadership, promotion, retirement...)*

* This list of issues is not meant to be comprehensive, but to reflect possible examples. In all areas, the committees will be expected to give special consideration to how these issues impact populations such as the aging, women in rural communities, minority populations, etc.

The Task Force

- Will include business, government, and civic leaders, appointed by the Governor for a period of 12 months, beginning November 2001;
- Will meet quarterly, unless otherwise agreed upon, in Frankfort;
- Will review the progress of the committees and provide council and feedback; and
- Will act as advocates for the overall project.

The Task Force Committees

- Will be convened by co-chairs chosen by a committee of the KCW board;
- Will be open to individuals from across the state who express an interest in participating;
- Will meet monthly in Frankfort for a period of 12 months, beginning November 2001;
- Will investigate the five obstacle areas;
- Will collect available data appropriate to their working topic;
- Will explore existing resources and determine “best practice” models; and
- Will compile and draft reports for presentation to the Task Force.